



Docket No.: NHL-DEL-01-REG

TRACK FOR MODEL CARS

APPLICATION PRIORITY DATA

This application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) from copending U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/390,681, filed on June 21, 2002.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention:

This invention relates to a race track for toy model cars. More specifically, this invention relates to a drag-race style race track in which toy cars are propelled by pressurized air.

2. Background Information:

The automobile racing game has become a favorite in both arcades and home game systems. Since its inception, it has taken on many forms. In some instances, a car race is simulated on a display screen. In others, the race cars are mechanically driven by motors. Still others are electronically operated. Continued consumer demand for the automobile racing game requires the frequent development of fresh, new approaches.

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to create a fun, innovative new form of the classic automobile racing game. The embodiments of the present invention offer a setting in which toy cars are pitted against each other in drag race fashion and are operated using controls which simulate those found in a real race car.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An embodiment of the invention could be a two-lane race track for model cars. The lanes herein may be referred to as the "Left Lane" and the "Right Lane." Each lane could be equipped with a corresponding driver's seat, a gearshift joystick, a clutch, and a series of pressurized air conduits.

The track of one embodiment of the invention could be made of plastic strips which are lined with piping on either side to prevent the car from exiting the track prematurely. The track of one embodiment could be designed to accommodate a "Drag-Race" type format in that the portion of the track in which the race takes place would be straight. Beyond that point, the track could curve around, reversing the course of each car so that the car will return to its operator.

The two U-shaped lanes could be arranged side by side so that the straight portions of both lanes are preferably parallel to each other. The racing portion of each lane is preferably positioned on the inside of the platform, while the return portion of each lane follows along the outsides.

The cars of one embodiment of the invention are preferably propelled by pressurized air. This air could travel through conduits. In one embodiment, the air could travel through copper tubes. Each lane could be equipped with its own system of air conduits. The air could be administered to the cars in bursts by a series of air jets. In one embodiment of the invention, the air jets could be positioned at four preferably equidistant points above the track. They are preferably held in place by Y-shaped supports.

The bursts of pressurized air are preferably activated by the operator using the gearshift joystick. Fashioned after a real automobile gearshift, the gearshift joystick could give access to four "gears." Each gear could be a trigger for the bursts of air. In one embodiment of the invention, the gear shift preferably has four such gears. At the precise moment each car passes under the pressurized air jets, the car's respective operator depresses the clutch with his

foot and shifts to the gear corresponding to that air jet. If timed properly, the air hopefully accelerates the car in the direction of the finish line. The object of the game, then, is to time the release of the air so that the maximum force possible is exerted on the car.

In one embodiment of the invention, a pole with signal lights is preferably fixed on the end opposite the players. These lights are modeled after the starting lights of a real drag race. They indicate when the race is to begin. A timer display could be fixed to the center of one embodiment of the invention. This timer display could indicate the time taken by each car to finish the race. By this information, the winner of the race is determined.

In one embodiment of the invention, at the start of the race, two players could be seated in the bucket seats, which are preferably positioned on opposite sides of the game platform. Each player places his car at the starting point in his respective lane, below the first air jet. When the starting light indicates to go, the drivers depress their clutches and shift to "first gear," activating the first bursts of air. When the cars pass under the second air jets, their operators shift to "Second gear" and release the second burst of compressed air, and so forth, until all jets have been activated, and

subsequently, the cars finish the race. The center timer then displays the amount of time taken by each car to complete the race. The cars coast around the remainder of the track, completing a U-Turn and returning to their respective drivers.

The above-discussed embodiments of the present invention will be described further hereinbelow. When the word "invention" is used in this specification, the word "invention" includes "inventions", that is the plural of "invention". By stating "invention", the Applicant does not in any way admit that the present application does not include more than one patentably and non-obviously distinct invention, and maintains that this application may include more than one patentably and non-obviously distinct invention. The Applicant hereby asserts that the disclosure of this application may include more than one invention, and, in the event that there is more than one invention, that these inventions may be patentable and non-obvious one with respect to the other.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The attached drawings illustrate at least one embodiment of the invention described above:

Figure 1 shows a view of the track;

Figure 2 shows the track in Figure 1 from another angle;

Figure 3 shows a side view of the start of the track and one driver's seat and gearshift joystick;

Figure 4 shows a frontal view of a driver's seat and gearshift joystick;

Figure 5 shows a head-on view of the light pole and the track;

Figure 6 shows a view from above of the start of the track and the cars;

Figure 7 shows the start of the track from behind;

Figure 8 shows the timer with the track;

Figure 9 shows a close-up view of the timer in Figure 8;

Figure 10 shows the top of the gearshift joystick;

Figure 11 shows the clutch being operated by a person;

Figure 12 shows a side view of two air jets with the track;

Figure 13 shows a side view of the gearshift joystick in Figure 10;

Figure 14 shows a view of both driver's seats and the start of the track;

Figure 15 shows a view from behind of the start of the track and the initial air jets;

Figure 16 shows a view from above of the start of the track and the initial air jets shown in Figure 15;

Figure 17 shows a view from above of the cars exiting the start of the track after the initial burst of air;

Figure 18 shows a car moving along the track;

Figure 19 shows a closer view of the car shown in Figure 18 moving along the track;

Figure 20 shows a frontal view of the U-turn of the track;

Figure 21 illustrates a burst of air from an air jet propelling a car as it moves along the track;

Figure 22 is a diagram of the gearshift joystick;

Figure 23 is a diagram of the network of compressed air conduits;

Figure 24A illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23;

Figure 24B illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23;

Figure 24C illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23;

Figure 24D illustrates the some of the materials used to build

the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23;

Figure 24E illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23;

Figure 24F illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23;

Figure 24G illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23;

Figure 25 is a diagram of the operation of the embodiment;

Figure 26 is a simplified electrical schematic diagram for implementation of a game control apparatus, which figure corresponds to Fig. 6 of U.S. Patent No. 4,072,310;

Figure 27 is a block diagram showing a game control apparatus, which figure corresponds to Fig. 3 of U.S. Patent No. 4,964,638;

Figure 28 is a block diagram of an electrical circuit associated with a movement detector, which figure corresponds to Fig. 3 of U.S. Patent No. 6,377,166 B1;

Figure 29A is a simplified overall electrical block diagram of a position and movement sensor showing the interconnection of preferred operating elements thereof, which figure corresponds to Fig. 1 of U.S. Patent No. 5,986,549;

Figure 29B is a simplified electrical schematic diagram showing alternative oscillator to sensor coupling and detector circuits, which figure corresponds to Fig. 2 of U.S. Patent No. 5,986,549;

Figure 30 is an enlarged sectional view of a position sensor, which figure corresponds to Fig. 2 of U.S. Patent No. 5,619,133;

Figure 31A is a side elevational view of an adjustable pedal mechanism for a motor vehicle, which figure corresponds to Fig. 1 of U.S. Patent No. 5,901,614;

Figure 31B is a side elevational view of an adjustable pedal mechanism for a motor vehicle, which figure corresponds to Fig. 2 of U.S. Patent No. 5,901,614;

Figure 32 is a perspective view of a gear shift tower assembly, which figure corresponds to Fig. 1 of U.S. Patent No. 5,950,493;

Figure 33 is a perspective view of a toy racing car, which figure corresponds to Fig. 1 of U.S. Patent No. D320,821; and

Figure 34 is a perspective view of a bucket seat, which figure corresponds to U.S. Patent No. D466,707.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Figure 1 shows a view of the track as seen from the perspective of a driver. At the far end of the track opposite the players, the light

pole 26 and the U-turn curves 6, 8 are shown. During the game, the cars race by traveling along the inner two sections 2, 4 of the track. After passing the finish line 28, the cars coast back along the U-turns 6, 8, and return to the drivers by way of the outer sections 10, 12 of the track. In the foreground, one can see the game timer 24. The track of one embodiment is constructed out of smooth plastic strips 50 lined with plastic piping 52 to guide the cars.

Figure 2 shows the track from an angle other than that shown in Figure 1. In the left foreground, light bulbs from the light pole 26 are shown. At the far end of the track, the driver's seats 32, 34 are shown fixed to either side of the track platform 60. The outer sections 10, 12 of the track and the inner sections 2, 4 of the track can be seen from this angle extending toward the driver's seats 32, 34. Also visible are the air jets 14 fixed to the track. A man is shown positioning the cars to prepare for the start of the race.

Figure 3 shows a side view of the start line of the track and the right driver's seat 34 and gearshift joystick 42. In one embodiment, the driver's seat is modeled after the bucket seat found in a real race car. Two cars 30 are positioned at the start 20, 22 of the inner sections 2, 4 of the track, and several more cars 30 are shown sitting

beside the inner section 4 of the track. The two initial air jets 16, 18 are shown fixed to the track. Also visible from this angle are the outer sections, 10, 12 of the track.

Figure 4 shows a frontal view of a driver's seat 32 and gearshift joystick 40. More specifically, this is the seat which corresponds to the controls of the left lane of the track. An operator of the racing game would sit in this driver's seat, operate the gearshift joystick with his hand, and the clutch with his foot. The back edge of the track platform 60 is shown to the driver's right.

Figure 5 shows a head-on view of the light pole 26 and the track. The light pole of one embodiment is designed to simulate the signal lights used in a real drag race. The inner sections 2, 4 and of the track and the outer sections 10, 12 of the track can be seen from this angle. The U-turn 6 of the track, which connects the inner section 2 of the track with the outer section 10 of the track, and the U-turn 8, which connects the inner section 4 of the track with the outer section 12 of the track, can be seen from this angle. Air jets 14 are shown fixed to the inner sections 2, 4 of the track.

Figure 6 shows a view from above of the start of the track and the cars. Several cars 30 are shown placed around the track. This

illustrates that many different toy cars may be used in the game. The driver's seat 34 is visible to the left of the track. A car 30 is placed on the inner section 4 of the track, directly in front of the initial air jet 18. Also visible from this angle is the initial air jet 16, which is fixed to the inner section 2 of the track. The outer sections 10, 12 of the track can also be seen from this angle.

Figure 7 shows the start of the track from behind the start line. The initial air jets 16, 18 are seen fixed above the inner sections 2, 4 of the track on Y-shaped supports. The air jets are connected to air conduits 48, which carry the pressurized air. The conduits are hidden within the platform 60. A car 30 is shown in the starting position 22 on the inner section 4 of the track. The light pole 26 and the game timer 24 are visible near the end of the platform 60, at the opposite end of the starting position of the car 30. The U-turn 6, which connects the inner section 2 of the track to the outer section 10 of the track is also visible from this angle. The outer section 12 of the track is also visible. The starting positions 20, 22 of the inner sections 2, 4 of the track are shown in the foreground. From this angle, it is possible to see the plastic strips 50 lined with plastic piping 52, which guides the cars 30.

Figure 8 shows the timer with the track. In one embodiment the timer is positioned in the middle of the platform 60, between the inner section 2 of the track and inner section 4 of the track, and between the second and third air jets 14. The outer sections 10, 12 of the track are also visible from this angle. Upon completion of the race, the game timer 24 presents the racing times of the car 30 in each lane on an LED display.

Figure 9 shows a close-up view of the game timer 24 in Figure 8. The LED time displays are shown at the top of the timer.

Figure 10 shows the top of the gearshift joystick 42 with a person's hand in position to operate the gearshift. Each gear preferably corresponds to an air jet on the track, including the initial air jets 16, 18 and the subsequent air jets 14. In one embodiment, there are four "gears." When the gearshift joystick 42 is shifted to a gear, a burst of pressurized air is emitted from the corresponding air jet. In another possible embodiment of the invention the release of a burst of pressurized air occurs when the clutch 62 is released. If timed with the arrival of the car under that particular jet, this burst of air propels the car faster.

Figure 11 shows the clutch 62 being operated by a person. As

in a real race car, the clutch 62 of one embodiment is depressed by the foot to enable the shifting of gears.

Figure 12 shows a side view of two air jets 14 with the inner sections 2, 4 of the track. In one embodiment the pressurized air conduits 48 are fed through holes into the platform 60 below so that they are mostly concealed. The air jets 14 are placed at equal points on each inner section 2, 4 of the track.

Figure 13 shows a side view of the gearshift joystick 42 in Figure 10. This particular gearshift joystick 42 controls the air jets 14 of the inner section 2 of the track. The outer section 10 of the left lane track is shown in the background.

Figure 14 shows a view of both driver's seats 32, 34 and the start of the track. Also visible is the gearshift joystick 42 for the left driver's seat 32. Two cars 30 are positioned at the start 20, 22 of the inner sections 2, 4 of the track, and several more cars 30 are shown sitting beside the inner section 4 of the track. The two initial air jets 16, 18 are shown fixed to the track. Also visible from this angle are the outer sections, 10, 12 of the track.

Figure 15 shows a view from behind of the start 20, 22 of the track and the initial air jets 16, 18. Two cars 30 are shown in

starting position, one in the inner section 2 of the track and one in the inner section 4 of the track. From this angle, it is possible to see the plastic strips 50 lined with plastic piping 52, which guides the cars 30. This figure shows the appearance of the track before the start of a race.

Figure 16 shows a view from above of the start 20, 22 of the track and the initial air jets 16, 18 shown in Figure 15. When the race is begun by the light pole 26, the operators shift to first gear, releasing the initial air burst from the initial air jets 16, 18 and setting the cars 30 in motion. The cars are guided on the smooth plastic strips 50 of the track by the plastic piping 52.

Figure 17 shows a view from above of the cars 30 exiting the start 20, 22 of the track after the initial burst of air from the initial air jets 16, 18. The cars 30 roll along the track and pass under a total of, in one embodiment, three more air jets 14. The operators must time each release of air by operating the gearshift joystick 42 with their hand and the clutch 62 with their foot, to coincide with the passage of the cars under the air jets 14. The outer sections 10, 12 of the track are also visible from this angle.

Figure 18 shows a car 30 moving along the track. The smooth

plastic surface 50 of the track in one embodiment of the invention allows for easy, fast movement of the cars 30. The plastic piping 52 of the track guides the cars 30.

Figure 19 shows a closer view of the car shown in Figure 18 moving along the track. The plastic pipes 52 along the sides of the track of one embodiment of the invention guide the cars 30 and prevent them from exiting the side of the track.

Figure 20 shows a frontal view of the U-turns 6, 8 of the track. Upon completion of the race, the cars glide along the U-turns 6, 8 by the power of the last air jet 14. The cars 30 are guided on the smooth plastic 50 of the track by the plastic pipes 52. Their course is reversed, and they coast back to the operators along the remainder of the track. Also visible from this angle is a portion of the light pole 26.

Figure 21 illustrates a burst of air from an air jet 14 propelling a car 30 as it moves along the track 50, 52. The bursts of air are controlled by the operator using the clutch 62 and the gearshift joystick 42. The pressurized air travels to the air jets 14 through air conduits 48. The car 30 is guided on the smooth plastic 50 of the track by the plastic pipes 52.

Figure 22 is a diagram of the gearshift joystick 42. The gears are arranged in the shape of an "H." Shifting to each gear activates an air valve 54, releasing a burst of pressurized air into the air conduits 48 and out of the corresponding air jet.

Figure 23 is a diagram of the network of compressed air conduits 48. The principal air conduit delivers air from the air compressor 46 to the system. The air regulator 44 controls the flow of air. The air is released by the gear shifts 40, 42 and travels along air conduits 48 until it is emitted in a burst from an air jet 14, 16, 18.

Figure 24A illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23. Air conduits 48 are shown connected to the air compressor 70. Air flows from the air compressor 70, through the air conduits 48.

Figure 24B illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23. The air regulator 44 is shown. Air flows from the air compressor 70, through the air conduits 48, and through the air regulator 44.

Figure 24C illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23. Specifically, the air conduits

48, which are made of copper, are shown. Air flows from the air compressor 70, through the copper air conduits 48 toward the air regulator 44 and the air jets 14, 16, 18.

Figure 24D illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23. Specifically, the wooden platform 60 is shown. Any number of measurements are possible for the wooden platform 60. The dimensions of the wooden platform 60 are therefore not limited to the measurements shown in Figure 24D, 1'X12'X10'.

Figure 24E illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23. Specifically, the smooth plastic strips 50 of the track are shown. Any number of measurements are possible for the smooth plastic strips 50 of the track. The dimensions of the smooth plastic strips 50 are therefore not limited to the measurements shown in Figure 24E, 2"X10'.

Figure 24F illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23. Specifically, the gear shifts 40, 42 are shown. The gears are arranged in the shape of an "H." Shifting to each gear activates an air valve 54, releasing a burst of pressurized air into the air conduits 48 and out of the corresponding

air jet 14, 16, 18.

Figure 24G illustrates the some of the materials used to build the embodiment shown in Figures 1-23. Specifically, the connecting base of the exit for the compressed air is shown. These are Y-shaped supports for the air jets 14, 16, 18 which are mounted to the track.

Figure 25 is a diagram of the operation of one embodiment. At the start of the game, the signal lights 26 and timer 24 are activated by the control apparatus 56. When the clutch 36, 38 is depressed and the gear shift 40, 42 utilized, a valve 54 is opened, releasing air from the air compressor 46 via the air regulator 44, through the air conduits 48, and out of an air jet 14 on the track. When the cars have passed through the length of the racing portion of the track 2, 4, a sensor 58 is triggered to inform the timer 24 that the race is finished.

Figures 26-34 are described herein. Figures 26-34 were obtained from the following U.S. Patents Nos: 4,072,310; 4,964,638; 6,377,166 B1; 5,986,549; 5,619,133; 5,901,614; 5,950,493; D320,821; and D466,707, which patents are hereby incorporated by reference as if set forth in their entirety herein. Figures 26-34 show examples of

systems or components that may possibly be utilized or adapted for use in at least one possible embodiment of the present invention.

The following descriptions are brief descriptions of Figures 26-34, and more detailed descriptions of these figures may be found in their corresponding U.S. patents listed above, which U.S. patents have been incorporated by reference into the present application.

Figure 26 is a simplified electrical schematic diagram for implementation of a game control apparatus, which figure corresponds to Fig. 6 of U.S. Patent No. 4,072,310.

Figure 27 is a block diagram showing a game control apparatus, which figure corresponds to Fig. 3 of U.S. Patent No. 4,964,638.

Figure 28 is a block diagram of an electrical circuit associated with a movement detector, which figure corresponds to Fig. 3 of U.S. Patent No. 6,377,166 B1.

Figure 29A is a simplified overall electrical block diagram of a position and movement sensor showing the interconnection of preferred operating elements thereof, which figure corresponds to Fig. 1 of U.S. Patent No. 5,986,549.

Figure 29B is a simplified electrical schematic diagram showing alternative oscillator to sensor coupling and detector circuits, which

figure corresponds to Fig. 2 of U.S. Patent No. 5,986,549.

Figure 30 is an enlarged sectional view of a position sensor, which figure corresponds to Fig. 2 of U.S. Patent No. 5,619,133.

Figure 31A is a side elevational view of an adjustable pedal mechanism for a motor vehicle, which figure corresponds to Fig. 1 of U.S. Patent No. 5,901,614.

Figure 31B is a side elevational view of an adjustable pedal mechanism for a motor vehicle, which figure corresponds to Fig. 2 of U.S. Patent No. 5,901,614.

Figure 32 is a perspective view of a gear shift tower assembly, which figure corresponds to Fig. 1 of U.S. Patent No. 5,950,493.

Figure 33 is a perspective view of a toy racing car, which figure corresponds to Fig. 1 of U.S. Patent No. D320,821.

Figure 34 is a perspective view of a bucket seat, which figure corresponds to U.S. Patent No. D466,707.

One feature of an embodiment of the invention resides broadly in a model car racing track, comprising: a track; said track having a left lane and a right lane; said left and right lanes being U-shaped; said track comprising: smooth strips; piping; and a finish line; a pressurized air network comprising: air conduits; an air compressor;

an air regulator; release valves; and air jets; at least one of said air jets being designated the initial air jet of each lane; a control system, comprising: clutches being disposed to be operated by foot; gearshift joysticks; a timer; a sensor; said sensor positioned at said finish line on each lane; a light pole; said light pole being fixed to stand vertically on the track; at least two model cars.

Another feature of an embodiment of the invention resides broadly in a model car racing game utilizing the track according to Claim 1, in which: said model cars are positioned on the plastic track; said model cars are positioned under the initial air jets at the start of game; said light pole indicating the start of race; said clutches being depressed to enable use of said gearshift joysticks; aid gearshift joysticks releasing bursts of pressurized air from said air jets; said pressurized air being transported by said air conduits; said model cars moving along said plastic track; said timer being configured to measure the time elapsed from the departure of said model cars from the start of said plastic track to the arrival of said model cars at said finish line; said timer being configured to display said elapsed time on an Light Emitting Diode display.

Examples of automotive clutch pedals which may be utilized in

accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention may be found in the following U.S. Patents: No. 4,301,908 entitled "Antivibration Device for a Clutch Pedal" issued on November 24, 1981 to Fukuda et al.; No. US D437,271S entitled "Mustang Car Brake And/Or Clutch Pedal" issued on February 6, 2001 to Saleen; No. 5,901,614 entitled "Adjustable Clutch Pedal System" issued on May 11, 1999 to Ewing; No. 4,497,217 entitled "Clutch Pedal Operation Through a Fore and Aft Shaft in a Fire Wall of a Vehicle" issued on February 5, 1985 to Hansen.

Examples of automotive gearshifts which may be utilized in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention may be found in the following U.S. Patents: No. 6,122,983 entitled "Shift Device for a Manual Transmission" issued on September 26, 2000 to Hoffman; No. 4,633,728 entitled "Gear Selector Control for Manual Transmission" issued on January 6, 1987 to May; No. 4,807,489 entitled "Gear Shift Device" issued on February 28, 1989 to Schreiner et al.; No. 5,067,362 entitled "Control Device" issued on November 26, 1991 to Holdenried; No. 5,979,262 entitled "Gearshift Device for a Motor Vehicle Manual Transmission" issued on November 9, 1999 to Doelling et al.; No. 5,950,493 entitled "Gear Shift Tower

Assembly" issued on September 14, 1999 to Pritchard.

The components disclosed in the various publications, disclosed or incorporated by reference herein, may be used in the embodiments of the present invention, as well as equivalents thereof.

An example of a motor race signaling system which may be utilized in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention may be found in the following U.S. Patent: No. US 6,380,863 B1 entitled "Signal Flag and Signaling System for Motor Racing" issued on April 30, 2002 to Swoboda et al.

The appended drawings in their entirety, including all dimensions, proportions and/or shapes in at least one embodiment of the invention, are accurate and are hereby included by reference into this specification.

Examples of toy car tracks which may be utilized in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention may be found in the following U.S. Patents: No. 5,038,685 entitled "Track Apparatus for a Toy Racing Car" issued on August 13, 1991 to Yoneda et al.; No. 5,899,789 entitled "Toy Car Track Assembly With Propelling Mechanism and Collision Course" issued on May 4, 1999 to Rehkemper et al.; No. 5,924,927 entitled "Racing Game Apparatus"

issued on July 20, 1999 to Matsuura et al.; No. 5,501,455 entitled "Racing Game Machine with Varying Track Levels" issued on March 26, 1996 to Hirata et al.; No. US 6,227,932 B1 entitled "Toy Racing Car Track System" issued on May 8, 2001 to Ngai.

All, or substantially all, of the components and methods of the various embodiments may be used with at least one embodiment or all of the embodiments, if more than one embodiment is described herein.

Examples of toy cars which may be utilized in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention may be found in the following U.S. Patents: No. Des.320,821 entitled "Toy Racing Car" issued on October 15, 1991 to Mochizuki; No. Des.359,082 entitled "Toy Race Car" issued on June 6, 1995 to Aker et al.; No. Des.379,385 entitled "Toy Car" issued on May 20, 1997 to Yeh; No. Des.383,808 entitled "Toy Race Car" issued on September 16, 1997 to Choi; No. Des.428,076 entitled "Toy Car" issued on July 11, 2000 to Wise et al.

All of the patents, patent applications and publications recited herein, and in the Declaration attached hereto, are hereby incorporated by reference as if set forth in their entirety herein.

Examples of air jets which may be utilized in accordance with

one or more embodiments of the present invention may be found in the following U.S. Patents: No. 5,634,636 entitled "Flexible Object Handling System Using Feedback Controlled Air Jets," issued on June 3, 1997 to Jackson et al.; No. 6,000,328 entitled "Gloss Control System Using Air Jets" issued on December 14, 1999 to Mareiniss; No. US 6,402,436 B1 entitled "Method and Device for Conveying Planar Ribbon of Crimped Fiber Using Air Jets" issued on June 11, 2002 to Murphy; No. 5,180,119 entitled "Vertical Lift System Through Tangential Blowing of Air Jets Channelled Over the Top of Rotating Cylinders" issued on January 19, 1993 to Picard; No. 4,305,536 entitled "Air Guides for Tape Transports Having Air Jets at Tangent Points" issued on December 15, 1981 to Burdorf et al.

All of the references and documents, cited in any of the documents cited herein, are hereby incorporated by reference as if set forth in their entirety herein. All of the documents cited herein, referred to in the immediately preceding sentence, include all of the patents, patent applications and publications cited anywhere in the present application.

Examples of game control apparatuses which may be utilized in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention

may be found in the following U.S. Patents: No. 4,072,310 entitled "Control Apparatus for a Card Game Simulator" issued on February 7, 1978 to Beam; No. 4,964,638 entitled "Control Apparatus for Game Machines" issued on October 23, 1990 to ishida; No. 5,238,250 entitled "Computer Game Control Apparatus" issued on August 24, 1993 to Leung et al.;

The details in the patents, patent applications and publications may be considered to be incorporable, at applicant's option, into the claims during prosecution as further limitations in the claims to patentably distinguish any amended claims from any applied prior art.

Examples of timer displays which may be utilized in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention may be found in the following U.S. Patents: No. Des.390,799 entitled "Timer Display" issued on February 17, 1998 to Uptegraph; No. Des.304,960 entitled "Display Board with Timer" issued on December 5, 1989 to Denton; No. 4,318,181 entitled "Timer Display Apparatus" issued on March 2, 1982 to Kawakami et al.

The abstract of the disclosure is submitted herewith as required by 37 C.F.R. §1.72(b). As stated in 37 C.F.R. §1.72(b):

A brief abstract of the technical disclosure in the specification

must commence on a separate sheet, preferably following the claims, under the heading "Abstract of the Disclosure." The purpose of the abstract is to enable the Patent and Trademark Office and the public generally to determine quickly from a cursory inspection the nature and gist of the technical disclosure. The abstract shall not be used for interpreting the scope of the claims.

Therefore, the abstract is not intended to limit the claims in any manner and should not be interpreted as limiting the claims in any manner.

Examples of automobile bucket seats which may be utilized in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention may be found in the following U.S. Patents: No. Des.422,154 entitled "Bucket Seat" issued on April 4, 2000 to Lieberman et al.; No. Des.279,437 entitled "Bucket Seat" issued on July 2, 1985 to Downey, Jr.; No. 6,053,575 entitled "Motor Vehicle Seat with a Back Rest and a Bucket Seat" issued on April 25, 2000 to Bauer et al.

It will be understood that the examples of patents, published patent applications, and other documents which are included in this application and which are referred to in paragraphs which state "Some

examples of ... which may possibly be used in at least one possible embodiment of the present invention.." may possibly not be used or useable in any one or more embodiment of the invention.

The sentence immediately above relates to patents, published patent applications and other documents either incorporated by reference or not incorporated by reference.

The invention as described herein above in the context of the preferred embodiments is not to be taken as limited to all of the provided details thereof, since modifications and variations thereof may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.